



## Iowa Medicaid Disease Management Program

[www.ime.state.ia.us](http://www.ime.state.ia.us)

1-515-256-4606 (in the Des Moines Area)

1-800-338-8366 (outside of the Des Moines Area)

### Stress Relief: A Positive Lifestyle

Learning to manage stress doesn't happen overnight. It's a process. The more you keep at it, the more you'll feel in control of daily events.

#### Set Limits

Trying to fit too much into a day is a major cause of stress. Setting limits will help you feel more in control. This sometimes means saying no—to people and even to things you might want to do. This can be hard at times. But knowing your priorities can help you make choices.

#### Know Your Priorities

Using your time and energy wisely is a good way to control stress. Save time for the things that matter most in your life. Ask yourself: Do I really need to do this? Do I want to do this? If you answer "yes," go ahead. But keep in mind you can also answer "no."



**Leave plenty of time for family fun. Have a cookout or play games together. And try to share at least one meal each day.**

#### Learn to Accept Support

Everybody needs support now and then. So don't feel embarrassed to ask for help when you need it. Most people are glad to lend a hand. And asking for help can open up new lines of communication and friendships.

#### Stress and Children

Be careful not to take stress out on your children. They may not understand why you're stressed. But they can sense your moods. Be aware that many children—especially teenagers—are under stress, too. So plan time to talk with your kids. Ask them about school and any problems they're having. Finally, make sure they have plenty of time for just being kids and having fun.

#### Be Part of Your Community

Taking part in community or faith-based events can offer a sense of belonging. It also helps put you in touch with active and caring people nearby. So whether it's a cleanup day at a local park or taking meals to the elderly, try to reach out to friends and neighbors. Just remember: Taking time for yourself once in a while makes it easier to help others later on.